

Atty. Docket No. CA1073
PATENT APPLICATION

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.114(c)
U.S. Application No. 09/870,581

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of retrieving information from one or more information sources in a search space, said method comprising:

providing central program code at a central computer; said central program code being adapted for maintaining a central database of data records, for accessing information from said information sources, and for comparing said data records with said information from said information sources;

recognizing communication between said central program code and remote program code at each of a plurality of at least one remote terminals terminal; said remote program code being adapted for monitoring network user activity of at least one user at each of said plurality of remote terminals, for collecting monitored data related to said network user activity and to each of said information sources accessed by any of said plurality of remote terminals, and for transmitting said monitored data to said central program code;

aggregating supplementing, at said central computer, said monitored data transmitted from said remote program code at all of said plurality of remote terminals and supplementing said data records in accordance with said monitored data to provide an augmented central database;

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responsive to a request for information from said at least one user ~~one of said plurality of remote terminals~~, identifying candidate response information from said information sources by employing ~~said central program code~~ at said central computer;

comparing contents of said data records augmented central database with said request and with said candidate response information by employing ~~said central program code~~ at said central computer; and

as a result of said identifying and said comparing, transmitting, to said remote program code at said at least one of said plurality of remote terminals terminal, data concerning one or more of said information sources which contain information relevant to said request so as to progressively tailor information retrieval results for said at least one user and provide said information retrieval results to said at least one user.

2. (Currently Amended) A central data aggregation An information retrieval system for accumulation and retrieval of data related to one or more information sources in a search space, said system comprising:

remote program code at a plurality of at least one remote terminals terminal; said remote program code being adapted for monitoring network user activity of at least one user at said plurality of remote terminals, for collecting monitored data related to said network user activity and to each of said information sources accessed by any of said at least one user plurality of remote terminals, and for transmitting said monitored data; and

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a central computer having central program code capable of communicating with said remote program code and receiving said monitored data transmitted from said remote program code at all of said plurality of remote terminals; said central program code being adapted for maintaining a central database of data records, and for accessing information from said information sources, and for comparing said data records with said information from said information sources;

~~wherein said central database comprises at least one data record relating to each of said information sources accessed by at least one of said plurality of remote terminals, and wherein said central computer has additional program code adapted for aggregating said monitored data transmitted from said program code at all of said plurality of remote terminals and for supplementing supplements said data records in accordance with said monitored data to provide an augmented central database,~~

said central computer identifying candidate response information from said information sources in response to a request for information from said at least one user, comparing contents of said augmented central database with said request and with said candidate response information, and transmitting, to said remote program code at said at least one remote terminal, data concerning one or more of said information sources which contain information relevant to said request so as to progressively tailor information retrieval results for said at least one user and provide said information retrieval results to said at least one user.

3. (Cancelled)

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4. (Cancelled)

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Cancelled)

7. (New) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said monitored data comprises implicit data, including data selected from the group consisting of queries and actions taken after receiving responses to said queries, said implicit data being added iteratively to said central database to form said augmented central database so as to progressively tailor information retrieval results for said at least one user based on said implicit data.

8. (New) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said monitored data comprises explicit data, including user input in response to one or more queries from said central computer, said user input including data selected from the group consisting of user profile information and user feedback concerning information retrieval results, said explicit data being added iteratively to said central database to form said augmented central database so as to progressively tailor information retrieval results for said at least one user based on said explicit data.

9. (New) A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein said monitored data further comprises explicit data, including user input in response to one or more queries from said central computer, said user input including data selected from the group consisting of user profile information and user feedback concerning information retrieval results, said explicit data being added iteratively to said central database to form said augmented central database so as to

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progressively tailor information retrieval results for said at least one user based on said implicit data and said explicit data.

10. (New) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein:

said remote program code is adapted for monitoring user activity of a plurality of users at a respective plurality of remote terminals, for collecting said monitored data related to said user activity and to each of said information sources accessed by said plurality of remote terminals, and for transmitting said monitored data to said central program code;

said supplementing comprises supplementing said data records based on said user activity at said plurality of remote terminals to provide said augmented central database; and

said transmitting to said remote program code comprises progressively tailoring said information retrieval results for said at least one user based on said user activity at said plurality of remote terminals.

11. (New) A method as claimed in claim 10, wherein said monitored data includes a plurality of user profiles, and wherein said central computer groups contents of said augmented central database based on said user profiles so as to tailor said information retrieval results for said at least one user based on one or more user profiles most closely matching a user profile of said at least one user.

12. (New) A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein said information retrieval results include an identity of at least one other user with whom said at least one user then can communicate to obtain further information.

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12. (New) A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein said information retrieval results include an identity of at least one other user with whom said at least one user then can communicate to obtain further information.

13. (New) A system as claimed in claim 2, wherein said monitored data comprises implicit data, including data selected from the group consisting of queries and actions taken after receiving responses to said queries, said implicit data being added iteratively to said central database to form said augmented central database so as to progressively tailor information retrieval results for said at least one user based on said implicit data.

14. (New) A system as claimed in claim 2, wherein said monitored data comprises explicit data, including user input in response to one or more queries from said central computer, said user input including data selected from the group consisting of user profile information and user feedback concerning information retrieval results, said explicit data being added iteratively to said central database to form said augmented central database so as to progressively tailor information retrieval results for said at least one user based on said explicit data.

15. (New) A system as claimed in claim 13, wherein said monitored data further comprises explicit data, including user input in response to one or more queries from said central computer, said user input including data selected from the group consisting of user profile information and user feedback concerning information retrieval results, said explicit data being added iteratively to said central database to form said augmented central database so as to

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progressively tailor information retrieval results for said at least one user based on said implicit data and said explicit data.

16. (New) A system as claimed in claim 2, wherein:

said remote program code is adapted for monitoring user activity at a plurality of remote terminals, for collecting said monitored data related to said user activity and to each of said information sources accessed by said plurality of remote terminals, and for transmitting said monitored data to said central program code;

said central program code supplements said data records based on user activity at said plurality of remote terminals to provide said augmented central database; and

said central computer progressively tailors said information retrieval results for said at least one user based on said network activity at said plurality of remote terminals.

17. (New) A system as claimed in claim 16, wherein said monitored data includes a plurality of user profiles, and wherein said central computer groups contents of said augmented central database based on said user profiles so as to tailor said information retrieval results for said at least one user based on one or more user profiles most closely matching a user profile of said at least one user.

18. (New) A system as claimed in claim 17, wherein said information retrieval results include an identity of at least one other user with whom said at least one user then can communicate to obtain further information.

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19. (New) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said search space comprises the Internet, and media programming comprising at least one of television programming and radio programming, so that said at least one user can access said media programming as a result of said information retrieval results.

20. (New) A system as claimed in claim 2, wherein said search space comprises the Internet, and media programming comprising at least one of television programming and radio programming, so that said at least one user can access said media programming as a result of said information retrieval results.

21. (New) A method of retrieving information from one or more information sources in a search space, said method comprising:

providing central program code at a central computer; said central program code being adapted for maintaining a central database of data records, for accessing information from said information sources, and for comparing said data records with said information from said information sources;

recognizing communication between said central program code and remote program code at each of a plurality of remote terminals; said remote program code being adapted for monitoring user activity of each of a plurality of users, for collecting monitored data related to said information retrieval activity, and for transmitting said monitored data to said central program code;

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supplementing, at said central computer, said data records in accordance with said monitored data to provide an augmented central database; responsive to a request for information from at least one user, identifying candidate response information from said information sources at said central computer; comparing contents of said augmented central database with said request and with said candidate response information at said central computer; and as a result of said identifying and said comparing, transmitting, to said remote program code at at least one of said plurality of remote terminals, data concerning one or more of said information sources which contain information relevant to said request so as to progressively tailor information retrieval results for at least one user and provide said information retrieval results to said at least one user.

22. (New) An information retrieval system for accumulation and retrieval of data related to one or more information sources in a search space, said system comprising: remote program code at each of a plurality of remote terminals; said remote program code being adapted for monitoring user activity of a plurality of users, for collecting monitored data related to said user activity and to each of said information sources accessed by said at least one user, and for transmitting said monitored data; and a central computer having central program code receiving said monitored data transmitted from said remote program code; said central program code being adapted for maintaining a central database of data records, for accessing information from said

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information sources, and for comparing said data records with said information from said information sources;

wherein said central program code supplements said data records in accordance with said monitored data to provide an augmented central database,

said central computer identifying candidate response information from said information sources in response to a request for information from said at least one user, comparing contents of said augmented central database with said request and with said candidate response information, and transmitting, to said remote program code at at least one of said plurality of remote terminals, data concerning one or more of said information sources which contain information relevant to said request so as to progressively tailor information retrieval results for at least one user and provide said information retrieval results to said at least one user.